

PEACE CORPS BULGARIA

Корпус на мира на САЩ в България



**2010
Annual Report**

Peace Corps worldwide

The Peace Corps was established on March 1, 1961 by United States President John F. Kennedy. Peace Corps aims to promote peace and understanding among people worldwide, by sending American volunteers to live and work together with the host country nationals.

As of 2010, nearly 200,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in 139 countries.

Peace Corps in Bulgaria

Since 1991, when the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in Bulgaria, more than 1100 Volunteers have served in more than 300 Bulgarian towns and villages.

Currently, 143 Peace Corps Bulgaria volunteers work in the areas of English language education, youth and grassroots community and organizational development particularly in underserved and remote communities.

The Goals of the Peace Corps

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their needs for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the people served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other people

Mission of Peace Corps

Bulgaria

By combining the knowledge and talent of people in Bulgarian communities and organizations with the skills and energy of Peace Corps Volunteers, we will be an effective agent of change and development at the grassroots level in Bulgaria.



Just the facts for 2010:

- Current number of Volunteers in December: **143**
- Number of individuals assisted in 2010: **13 990**
- Number of organizations assisted in 2010: **713**
- Number of communities assisted in 2010: **515**



Peace Corps Bulgaria Programs

Community and Organizational Development

Volunteers in this program help build cooperation at the grassroots level. They encourage collaboration between local governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) entrepreneurs, and civic groups. Volunteers help communities conduct needs assessments and create programs to address these needs. They promote volunteerism, assist with local economic development, teach management and organizational skills, help with environmental education, and help communities recognize their strengths and assets.

Youth Development

Youth Development volunteers assist Bulgarian non-governmental organizations, culture centers, youth centers, institutions for children deprived of parental care. Training camps, extra curricular educational programs, sports competitions and health discussions are only a small piece of the volunteers' work as part of Bulgarian teams. Youth Development volunteers' assistance follows three major directions: a) Direct work with the children of the community; b) Enhancing the capacity of the grassroots organizations involved in youth development and c) Support to the whole community's work with the children and youths.



Education

English language education is a national priority, as Bulgaria is an EU member striving to become fully active in the global community. Peace Corps helps address this need by providing Volunteer teachers in primary and secondary schools to help both students and teachers. Education Volunteers also work on community projects including youth camps, adult English courses, and minority community development. Volunteers work with students and counterparts to help develop business skills, to teach computer skills, to promote peer education programs, to create HIV/AIDS awareness, and to educate youth to prevent human trafficking.

Community and Organizational Development Program

- Goal 1:** Improved Administrative Capacity in Local Organizations
- Goal 2:** Increased Environmental Awareness and Involvement
- Goal 3:** Improved Ability to Succeed in the Market Place
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Activities on Goal 1:

COD Volunteers supported the organizational strengthening of 338 local organizations and assisted for the capacity building of their employees in the areas of project design and management of small community projects, information technologies and English language. They helped with establishing and maintaining contacts with donor organizations, assisted with the implementation of Cross-border cooperation projects, and for the development of local, regional, national and international partnerships.

Activities on Goal 2:

COD Volunteers and their community partners organized environmental education programs, eco and scout camps, environment awareness campaigns, environmental holiday celebrations. They implemented projects for urban environment improvements, took part in bird monitoring and counting, organized eco hikes, discussions and presentations on biodiversity conservation, took part in the maintenance of eco-trails and recreation locations.



Activities on Goal 3:

COD Volunteers assisted local organizations with the business documentation in English – translations of project proposals and reports, international correspondence and web pages, organized trainings and gave consultations to entrepreneurs, developed investment profiles, helped for the development of business skills of local youth, assisted minority representatives to start small businesses, developed tourism information materials and products.

Community and Organizational Development Program

Summarized results of the activities in 2010:

- Number of Volunteers: **50**
- Types of partner organizations: municipalities, NGOs, museums, parks, culture houses, schools, social institutions

 Peace Corps	Number of people impacted by the partnership with COD Program						Number of organizations and communities impacted by the partnership	
	Males above 24	Females above 24	Males 15-24 r.	Females 15-24r.	Males under 15	Females under 15	Oorganiz ations	Commu- nities
Commu- nity members	448	527	1128	1068	944	897	338	290
Specialists	169	207	27	19	7	143		



It is great to have someone to play chess or basketball with - Boarding School in Zavet



The colleagues in the office are excited to study English, Samokov

“...We speak different languages, we have different cultures and traditions but there are much more things that unite us. The most important ones are the willingness to help, to understand each other, to be helpful.”

Volunteer's Counterpart from Belene

Youth Development Program

- Goal 1:** Direct work with youth
- Goal 2:** Building the capacity of youth service providers and youth-serving organizations
- Goal 3:** Building parental and community support for youth development
-

Activities on Goal 1:

Together with their Bulgarian colleagues YD volunteers organized educational after-school programs, sport, recreational and outdoor activities, thematic, educational and multiethnic camps, activities and projects providing behavioral support to youth, debate clubs, computer literacy courses, remedial classes, environmental projects, fundraising activities. They taught English to youth of different age & ethnic groups. They also celebrated American and Bulgarian holidays.



Activities on Goal 2:

YD Volunteers organized English courses, trainings and seminars for youth service providers and youth serving organizations, informal demonstrations of various educational games and activities for use with developmentally delayed students, multidisciplinary meetings to plan projects for the upcoming year, curriculum for teaching leadership through sport to Bulgarian male youth. They created curriculum and report forms about the progress of children with special needs and loan program for high-risk families. They worked on restructuring local libraries and digitally cataloging the books and on Youth focused grant applications.

Activities on Goal 3:

YD Volunteers organized parenting workshops, Open Door events for the parents of the children in institutions, art activities and games with the families of children with disabilities, events involving the whole community, including Special Olympics, youth sports day at the stadium, a charity football tournament, etc. Different volunteers were involved in finding and organizing funding for a fitness room at an orphanage, preparation of the 120 anniversary celebration of the Community Center, project for integration of children with special needs into the larger community and restoration of a park.

Youth Development Program

Summarized results of the activities in 2010:

- Number of Volunteers: **42**
- Types of partner organizations:: culture houses, youth centers, NGOs, orphanages, resource centers, schools, municipalities

 Peace Corps	Number of people impacted by the partnership with YD Program						Number of organizations and communities impacted	
	Males above 24	Females above24	Males 15-24	Females 15-24r.	Males under 15	Females under 15	Organizations	Communities
Community members	38	53	431	288	1542	1100	121	105
Specialists	67	196	6	6	2	—		



It is more fun drawing together -
The Youth Center in Zlatograd.



Smiling faces in the Day Center for kids
with disabilities in Kazanlak

“The Volunteer’s contribution for Day center for kids with disabilities in Kazanluk could not be described in a few words. Her professional qualifications, excellent knowledge and skills, and last but not least—her exclusive ability to work with kids with special needs, let the staff in the Day Center receive high quality training”

Volunteer’s counterpart from Kazanlak

Education Program

- Goal 1:** Improve the English language skills and communication in English.
- Goal 2:** Professional and personal development of Bulgarian teachers, youth and community members
- Goal 3:** Community development and capacity building of schools, institutions and minority groups
-



Activities on Goal 1:

Volunteers taught English in Bulgarian primary and secondary state schools, kindergartens. They organized various after school and extra-curricular activities in English: summer school programs, preparation for TOEFL, IELTS, and university entry exams, English language clubs including essay writing, reading competition, drama clubs performing plays in English.

Volunteers engaged in Adult English classes for teachers, directors, parents, students, municipal officials and local business employees , along with one-on-one tutoring for interested community members.

Activities on Goal 2:

Volunteers team-teaching with their Bulgarian counterparts is considered an excellent way of experience exchange and skills transfer. Discussions and exchange of ideas and methods of teaching a foreign language were initiated , and Bulgarian teachers learnt more about American culture. Volunteers involved community members in organizing and celebrating various American holidays, and schools were linked to American schools. Discussions on American politics, history, music were held in the “Friends of America” clubs. Volunteers organized summer camps, sports activities, baseball teams, anti-AIDS and environmental education , arts and crafts, etc.

Activities on Goal 3:

Volunteers with their project teams implemented projects to renovate rooms, enhance libraries, and equip multimedia classrooms. They organized Roma culture clubs, multi-ethnic summer camps, implemented a 10-week social integration project called” Circle of friends” where students spent time working and playing games with kids with disabilities.

Education Program

Summarized results of the activities in 2010

- Number of Volunteers: **95**
- Types of partner organizations: primary and secondary schools, language and professional schools, orphanages, culture houses, kindergartens

 Peace Corps	Number of people impacted by the partnership with Education Program						Number of organizations and communities impacted	
	Males above 24	Females above 24	Males 15-24	Females 15-24r.	Males under 15	Females under 15	Organizations	Communities
Community members	397	1021	3535	3272	4608	5038	250	120
Specialists	130	601	33	53	109	143		



English class in the Primary School in Stolipinovo district, Plovdiv



Summer English Language Academy in Blagoevgrad

“The Volunteers contributes a lot for improving students’ language skills, applying a communicative approach in their English classes and using authentic materials. Her work is also useful for increasing students’ intercultural competence. Students learn to be more tolerant and accept differences in the time spent with the Volunteer in class and after class.”

Volunteer’s Counterpart from Haskovo

Response Corps Program

- Response Corps is a new Peace Corps program in Bulgaria which started in 2010. It sends former Peace Corps volunteers (qualified and dedicated volunteers, who have already served for 2 years in Peace Corps countries around the world) to help different areas of Bulgarian development process for the period of 6 months.
- Response Corps acts where the country meets specific problems, strengthens and expands existing Peace Corps programs and develops new ones. Response Corps partners with regional and local institutions - libraries, youth centers, NGOs, social institutions.

Activities:

Together with their partnering organizations, volunteers carry out library programs and teacher development trainings, they promote and expand Bulgarian scouts organizations' network and train scouts leaders, they involve youth in extracurricular or summer activities, such as - arts and crafts, history and journalism. They consult physiotherapists who work with special needs kids and they support the kids' parents in their individualized family plans.



Physiotherapy in Karin Dom in Varna

Summarized results of the activities in 2010:

Number of Volunteers: **4**

Types of partner organizations: Sofia University Institute for training of teachers, Organization of Bulgarian Scouts – Asenovgrad branch, Children's complex in Provadia, Karin Dom (Day care center for kids with special needs) – Varna.

Number of specialists impacted by the partnership	150 teachers, 52 scout leaders, 3 youth activities organizers, 30 physiotherapists
Number of kids and youth involved	50
Number of organizations impacted by the partnership	4

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КОРПУС НА МИРА **PEACE**
БЪЛГАРИЯ **CORPS**



2011 is a momentous and festive year for us because we commemorate 20 years of Peace Corps in Bulgaria and 50 years from the moment when President Kennedy first introduced the idea of creating the organization in an impromptu election speech before Michigan University students. Since then, Peace Corps Volunteers have continuously built successful and unique partnerships at the grassroots level, have developed friendships, and have promoted peace and positive change in the world. In 2011, with a series of events and activities in Bulgaria we will celebrate these important anniversaries*. Here are some of them:

March 2011

- * March 10th - Opening of a photography exhibition in the park in front of the National Theater called “20 years Peace Corps in Bulgaria “
- * Start shooting a documentary on the activities of Peace Corps Bulgaria
- * Arrival of the new group of volunteers in Bulgaria

June 2011

- * Open air concert at the Hristo Botev square in Vratsa to commemorate the arrival of the first group of Volunteers in Bulgaria in June 1991

September 2011

- * Volunteer day for the Peace Corps Bulgaria staff (together with Habitat for Humanity)

December 2011

- * December 5th (International Day of Volunteer) - Official Awards Ceremony and presentation of the documentary film on the activities of Peace Corps Bulgaria

*The full calendar of events can be found on peace Corps Bulgaria website—<http://bulgaria.peacecorps.gov>

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